

country will never be forgotten. These brave men and women who fought for America and endured cruelties and deprivation as prisoners of war helped to protect our Nation, liberated millions of people from the threats of tyranny and terror, and advanced the cause of freedom worldwide.

This year, our Nation commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the armistice to end armed conflict in the Korean War. We remember Operation Little Switch, conducted April through May 1953, that freed 149 American POWs, and Operation Big Switch, conducted August through September 1953, which returned 3,597 Americans to our country. Finally, Operation Glory, conducted July through November 1954, was responsible for the return of the remains of 2,944 Americans from North Korea. During this observance, we also recognize and honor the more than 8,100 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean War.

This year also marks the 30th anniversary of Operation Homecoming, in which 591 American POWs from Vietnam were returned. We also recognize and honor those Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

All of these individuals are to be honored for their strength of character and for the difficulties they and their families endured. From World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam, to the 1991 Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other conflicts, our service men and women have sacrificed much to secure freedom, defend the ideals of our Nation, and free the oppressed. By answering the call of duty and risking their lives to protect others, these proud patriots continue to inspire us today as we work with our allies to extend peace, liberty, and opportunity to people around the world.

As we honor our former POWs, we are reminded of our current POWs, captured in Operation Iraqi Freedom. We will work to secure their freedom, and we pray for their speedy and safe return. These brave men and women in uniform follow in the footsteps of these former POWs who placed country above self to advance peace in a troubled world.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2003, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all the people of the United States to join me in remembering former American prisoners of war by honoring the memory of their sacrifices and in praying for the safe return of our POWs. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

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Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation on the Faith-Based Initiative

April 9, 2003

I commend the Senate for acting in a bipartisan way to pass legislation that will help us meet our shared goal of better serving Americans in need. This legislation contains key elements of the Faith-Based Initiative that I proposed more than 2 years ago to encourage more charitable giving and rally the armies of compassion that exist in communities all across America.

America's charities face tough times, and we can do more to support their efforts. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress to improve the CARE Act legislation, and I continue to urge Congress to take additional steps to end discrimination against faith-based organizations that have a proven record of helping people in need realize a better life.

**Proclamation 7661—National
D.A.R.E. Day, 2003**

April 9, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Drugs destroy the hopes, dreams, and the health of our children, and we must continue to work to reduce drug use among America's young people. Today we honor Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.), the most widely recognized substance abuse and violence prevention curriculum in America. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this important program, we recognize D.A.R.E.'s proud record of helping millions of young people lead productive, drug-free, and violence-free lives, and reaffirm our commitment to end illegal drug use among our youth.

D.A.R.E. was founded in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), which faced an overwhelming drug use problem among juveniles and saw the need for a program to educate children and young adults about the destructive realities of substance abuse. Teaming with the Los Angeles Unified School District, the LAPD sent specially trained police officers into classrooms to teach middle school students how to resist peer pressure and make positive decisions. Since that beginning 20 years ago, D.A.R.E. has grown to reach 36 million students in more than 300,000 classrooms in the United States and around the world. Today, D.A.R.E. programs are taught in 80 percent of our Nation's school districts.

D.A.R.E.'s in-school curriculum focuses on giving children practical skills to avoid becoming involved in drugs, gangs, and violence. D.A.R.E. officers serve as supportive role models and encourage young people to develop healthy self-esteem. D.A.R.E. also helps young people in the critical after-school hours through D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. (Play and Learn Under Supervision), a follow-up program that serves as a safe and fun alternative to the local streets. D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. is designed to encourage middle school students to start taking responsibility for their actions

and to engage in activities other than drug use.

One of the core principles of my National Drug Control Strategy is to stop drug use before it starts, and D.A.R.E. and D.A.R.E. P.L.U.S. play an important role in my community-based approach. Through these programs, parents, educators, law enforcement officials, and other caring citizens are joining together in a collaborative fight against illegal drugs. However, we have more to do to reduce illegal drug use among America's youth. The most effective way to reduce the supply of drugs is to reduce the demand, and I am confident that we can help accomplish this goal through a focus on effective, family-centered education and prevention.

Toward this end, I have proposed the creation of a Parents Drug Corps to educate and train parents to lead the effort in preventing drug use among children and teens. In addition, I have asked the Congress to support millions of parents and concerned citizens in communities nationwide by doubling funding for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program. These new efforts will complement our ongoing work to surround our most vulnerable children with caring adults who can offer support, guidance, and encouragement.

As we honor the dedicated individuals whose extraordinary efforts make D.A.R.E. work, we resolve to continue to help young people avoid the dangers of drug use and violence. By helping to ensure that all our children are educated and supported by positive and caring role models, we contribute to a promising future that offers hope and opportunity for all.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 10, 2003, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I call upon all the people of the United States, particularly our youth, parents, and educators, to observe this day by joining the fight against drugs in our communities. I also encourage our citizens to express appreciation for the law enforcement officers, volunteers, and others who work to help young people avoid the dangers of drug use.